

## THE INCOME TAX BILL

The Commoner is heartily in favor of the income tax bill and congratulates democrats of the house upon their good work for that measure. In opposing the income tax amendment to the constitution in 1908 Mr. Taft said that the income tax could be secured by statute whenever the people wanted it. It is plain that the people want it now and it is well that congress seems disposed to give it to them. The objection made to the constitutionality of the measure by men who would be opposed to it even if its constitutionality had been specifically affirmed by the supreme court should not deter any friend of the measure from supporting it. The supreme court can be depended upon to nullify the measure if it is not constitutional, and the court would be likely to resolve any doubt against the measure rather than in favor of it.

That being the case, senators and representatives ought to feel free to resolve the doubt in favor of the people. A good rule to follow in matters of legislation is to give the people the benefit of the doubt in case a constitutional objection is raised to a desirable measure. Nobody except the supreme court is in a position to decide a constitutional question, and the court can not decide such a question until the case reaches the court.

If the proposed income tax measure is defeated in congress we shall have no way of knowing whether it is constitutional or not. If the measure is passed we shall soon know, and if the court upholds it we shall have a good law. If the court nullifies the measure the decision will furnish us a guide for the drafting of future bills.

The Commoner is also in favor of the free sugar bill. Taking the tax off sugar and putting it on incomes reduces the tax on consumption. The tax on sugar taxes people not in proportion to wealth, but in proportion to the amount of sugar they consume. All taxes on consumption overburden the poor and underburden the rich, and a tax on sugar is especially open to this objection. A poor man with a large family probably consumes more sugar than a rich man with a small family.

So large a proportion of our federal revenues is derived from taxes on consumption that we ought to welcome any step toward equalization of the burden.

## BRYAN BIRTHDAY DINNER, LINCOLN, NEB., MARCH 19TH

Nebraska news report: The Bryan Birthday Dinner given at Lincoln, Neb., annually, in honor of Mr. Bryan, has always been a large affair. The indications are, however, that the celebration this year will be the biggest and liveliest in history. William J. Bryan's birthday is March 19th. The dinner and celebration of this event will be under the auspices of the Lincoln Bryan club. The dinner will be held in Lincoln's large auditorium on the evening of March 19th. Mr. O. W. Meier, president of the club, will act as toastmaster, and the toast list will comprise a large number of America's distinguished men.

Among the speakers at this dinner will be Ollie James, senator-elect from Kentucky, Senator Thomas P. Gore of Oklahoma, former Senator R. F. Pettigrew of South Dakota, George Fred Williams of Massachusetts, Representative Robert L. Henry of Texas. Frederick Townsend Martin, member of one of the wealthy families in New York, will be present and speak to the toast, "The Idle Rich."

A progressive conference will be held on the afternoon of March 19th and at this conference measures will be taken for the further organization of Nebraska democrats to the end that a real victory may be won at the polls in November. Everyone is invited to attend the Bryan birthday banquet. Tickets for this dinner will be \$1.00 and may be obtained by addressing Frederick Shepherd, chairman banquet committee, Lincoln, Neb. No special invitations are issued but everybody welcome.

## A SIGNIFICANT PHRASE

The following significant phrase in Mr. Roosevelt's announcement seems to have been overlooked by the press. He said: "I will accept the nomination for president if it is tendered to me, AND I WILL ADHERE TO THIS DECISION UNTIL THE CONVENTION HAS EXPRESSED ITS PREFERENCE."

Why does he feel it necessary to insist that THIS announcement will be ADHERED TO? Is it a confession that other announcements have been withdrawn? Did the progressives demand

this "burning of the bridges" to insure them against being left holding the bag? Or is it simply an answer to Mr. Taft's statement that nothing but death would withdraw him from the race? It has a meaning that does not appear on the surface—what is it?

One thing is certain, it indicates that the ex-president will not demand an overwhelming majority—one will do.

## A HARMON BOOMER

The Chicago Inter-Ocean, a Taft organ, whose owner admitted borrowing money from Hines, the Lorimer agent, is now booming Governor Harmon. It says:

"Some conspicuous democrats in northern Illinois have organized in support of Governor Harmon of Ohio as a candidate for the presidency and have opened headquarters in Chicago. This movement is timely and needed.

"The strength of Governor Harmon is that he has remained sober when other democratic leaders have gone crazy, and has thought and spoken sense while they have thought and spoken nonsense.

"Such men as Judson Harmon are not continuously chattered about, but they are remembered when their party and the country needs men to do men's work."

Is it not enough to have the reactionary democrats pushing Mr. Harmon? Must we endure the added humiliation of having him forced upon the party by reactionary republicans.

## AN AVENUE FOR ALTRUISM

There ought to be a weekly democratic paper in every county in the United States and there should be a state weekly in every state. It does not cost very much to run a weekly—it can not possibly lose much and ought to be self-supporting. Here is a field for the altruist. We have an increasing number of men who can edit such a paper and who can afford to take such chances as are involved in it. Such a paper can be edited without withdrawal from other work. The Commoner commends this avenue of usefulness to those who yearn to render an unselfish public service.

## NO MORE JUDICIAL NEGATIVE

Publicity as to recommendations for judicial positions is coming. For a little while longer the president may be permitted to retire to the dark room of the White house and develop judicial negatives appointed upon secret requests—but only for a little while. The demand for publicity is growing. The president must step out into the sun light and let the people know WHAT he does and WHY.

## TIME TO ACT

As long ago as 1898 Congressman Jones of the state of Washington introduced a bill providing for publicity as to the ownership of newspapers. Is it not about time for the public to know who owns the newspapers? The newspaper is at present, a dark-lantern—it throws light on the public while darkness conceals the one who holds the lantern.

## NO MEGAPHONE

Some of Mr. Roosevelt's friends picture their candidate as a Cincinnatus called to the service of his country, but if they will make even a casual investigation they will find that Cincinnatus did not leave his plow in the field four months before the convention and rush to the front gate with a megaphone.

## CONSPIRACY PAYS

It seems that J. Pierpont Morgan received \$69,300,000 as his compensation for organizing the Steel trust—more than one-sixth the estimated cost of the Panama canal. Quite a snug sum to pay a financial bandit for organizing a conspiracy against the people.

## WHERE HE STANDS

It is contended that Col. Roosevelt can be found on both sides of every question. But there is the tariff. As to that he is on neither side.—Sioux City (Ia.) Journal (rep.)

The Taft and Roosevelt committees are beginning to reveal secrets against each other. Good! They know enough to disgrace both factions. When republicans fall out democrats will get their dues. Length to their tongues!

## THE CONSOLATIONS OF AGE

On another page will be found a cartoon, taken from the Cleveland Leader. It was drawn by Mr. Ole May and is reproduced by permission. It is such an artistic presentation of a beautiful sentiment that it is thought worthy of reproduction at this time when Mr. Bryan is passing the fifty-second milestone on life's pathway. Age has many consolations, the gathering in of the results of early effort, communion with the children who have grown up about the fire-side, visits with grand-children, etc., but among the joys that crown the latter years none are sweeter than those that come from the confidential companionship of a congenial pair who grow old together—each increasing in the other's love. The song, "Silver Threads Among the Gold," tenderly and touchingly strikes the heart-strings and turns the thoughts back over the stretch of wedded bliss, warmed with affection and brightened with fidelity—and suggest a closing that only a glorious sunset can parallel. The readers of The Commoner are invited to share with Mr. and Mrs. Bryan the delightful reminiscences recalled by the cartoon and the song which brought it forth:

## SILVER THREADS AMONG THE GOLD

1.

Darling I am growing old,  
Silver threads among the gold,  
Shine upon my brow today,  
Life is fading fast away.  
But my darling, you will be,  
Always young and fair to me,  
Yes, my darling, you will be,  
Always young and fair to me.

## CHORUS—

Darling, I am growing old,  
Silver threads among the gold.  
Shine upon my brow today,  
Life is fading fast away.

2.

When your hair is silver white  
And your cheek no longer bright,  
With the roses of the May  
I will kiss your lips and say,  
Oh, my darling, mine alone,  
You have never older grown,  
Yes, my darling, mine alone,  
You have never older grown.

3.

Life can nevermore grow old,  
Locks may lose their brown and gold.  
Cheeks may fade and older grow,  
But the heart that loves will know  
Never winter's frost and chill,  
Summer warmth is in them still.  
Never winter's frost and chill,  
Summer warmth is in them still.

4.

Love is always young and fair.  
What to us is silver hair,  
Faded cheeks or steps grown slow  
To the heart that beats below.  
Since I kissed you, mine alone,  
You have never older grown,  
Since I kissed you, mine alone,  
You have never older grown.

## CHINA'S EXAMPLE

The establishment of a republic in China, the first in Asia, under which some 400,000,000 of human beings will govern themselves, will shake the thrones of the world. We have regarded the Chinese as a very backward people in many respects, but they have certainly surprised us in the successful fight they have made for the establishment of a republic. It is a great compliment that these hundreds of millions of people should pass over kings and emperors and give the chief executive of the new government a title patterned after ours. The papers have reported Japan as using her influence to retain the monarchy. That was not unnatural. The friends of the emperor could easily see that China's example would inspire a desire for a republic in Japan, just as the reduction of the influence of the house of lords in England has weakened hereditary government everywhere.

Before the Roosevelt managers condemn Mr. Taft too severely for using the patronage to secure his renomination they ought to remember that Mr. Roosevelt, when president, used his patronage to nominate Mr. Taft and now relies quite largely on men whom he aided officially.